

Attorney Docket No. 60072-0808

REMARKS

No amendments to the application have been made in this reply. Hence, claims 1-33 and 36-49 are pending in the application. All issues raised in the Office Action mailed February 11, 2004 are addressed hereinafter.

Summary of Office Action

1. Claims 1-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.
2. Claims 1-11 and 36-47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hawkins.
3. Claims 12 and 48-49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hawkins (IDS USP 6,000,000) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,974,238, herein said Chase.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112

Examiner has requested applicant to explain and provide correspondences for the terminology used in the claims with ones used in the application. The terminology used in the claims corresponds with the ones in the specifications as follows:

An index refers to a list or collection of one or more information items also referred to as a group of information items (Page 20 lines 6-8). For example, a group of items could be a calendar of events, professional or personal contacts. The index can be associated with a particular identity of an entity, such as another user, handheld computer or device. (Page 20 lines 16-19) The information items have been grouped and/or sorted into separate indexes. The claim terminology "first-index" refers to a specific index that is distinguishable from other indexes. Similarly, "second index" refers to another index.

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(Claim 1 lines 3-7, see previous amendment) For example, first-index may refer to information items to be shared with a co-worker and second index may refer to information items shared between a spouse

A group of information items refers to a set or subset of information items that a handheld computer user wishes to synchronize with another handheld computer. (Page 20 line 25, Page 21 lines 1-2) A group of information items may contain all information items stored on the handheld computers or it may contain only the information items associated with a requestor's identification. (Page 21 lines 4-9) The claim terminology "first group of information items" refers to a specific set of information items. Likewise the term "second group of information items" refers to another set of information items. (Claim 1 lines 4-5, see previous amendment)

The term "first information item" refers to specific information items such as one of those listed above which is contained in a group of information items. (Claim 1 lines 4-6, see previous amendment) An information item is not limited to one group of information items and may be intermixed between groups and indexes, i.e. "the first group and second group contain a first information item". The information items may be a member of multiple groups of information items and may also be referenced by multiple indexes. (Page 20 lines 13-14) Thus, the information items listed in an index may be a subset of information items referenced by another index. For example, the information items to be shared with a co-worker may be the subset: work events, professional contacts and a to-do list and the information items to be shared with a home computer is the set: events (including work events), personal contacts, professional contacts and a to-do list.

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The claim terminology referring to “first entity” and “second entity” refers to an entity of the second handheld computer that is associated with a User Id, User or Handheld computer Id identifier to the requested information items on the second handheld computer. (Page 7 lines 4-12)

The following example illustrates an embodiment covered by claim 1. A manager with a handheld computer can synchronize a specific group of files or applications (such as a calendar of events or contacts list) with an employee's handheld computer, as well as a spouse's handheld computer. The manager's handheld computer has a set of indexes that the manager can select from. The indexes, which are associated with an entity, can be used to identify a group of information items to synchronize with a computer associated with the entity. In this case, index one is associated with an employee id and index two is associated with the computer id of a spouse. Index one contains references to a calendar of work events and a professional contacts list. Index two contains references to a calendar of all events (including work events) and a personal contacts list. The calendar of work events is intermixed between the indexed groups of information items because it is contained in both the group of information items relating to the employee as well as the spouse. In this way, not only may different groups of items be selected for synchronization with the different computers, but the same set of information items, the calendar of work events, is synchronized with the computers of both the employee and spouse.

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Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)**Claim 1**

Claim 1, as recited, cites features not suggested much less disclosed by Hawkins.

Among these features are:

(1) storing on a handheld computer two indexes such that each index associates a distinct group of information items to an entity associated with a computer (e.g. a user, user id of handheld computer user, an id of a handheld computer);

(2) for each index, selecting at least one indexed information item to synchronize with data on a different computer; and

(3) selecting an information item that is intermixed among different groups of information items and referenced by indexes to synchronize with different computers.

These features provide important abilities. For data on a computer that must be kept synchronized with multiple sources (i.e. multiple users or multiple computers), the features allow different groups of the data to be kept synchronized with different bodies of data on different computers. For example, handheld computer A can synchronize an information group 1 with B, an information group 2 with C and information group 1 also with D.

Second, it allows the same information item to be intermixed among multiple groups of information items. The intermixed information items can be synchronized with data on different computers. For example, a manager tracks appointments on a handheld computer using an appointment application. Some of the appointments are work related and some are strictly personal. Records for work related appointments are indexed to a

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user group of employees. Records for all appointments are indexed to the manager's personal PC. The features of claim 1 allow work related appointment records to be selected for synchronization with data on the handheld computers of employees, and all appointment records, including the work related ones, to be selected for synchronization with the data on the personal PC. This feature allows the work related records to be intermixed among different indexes and synchronized with different entities.

These features are not disclosed or suggested by the cited art. In fact, such features are not possible using the system described in Hawkins. In particular, it is not possible to select to synchronize different groups of information items with different computers using the system taught or suggested by Hawkins. In Hawkins, software on a PC loops through a single synchronization list of conduit libraries, calling each conduit library in an iteration to synchronize a database of an application. (see col. 6, lines 37 – 55, fig. 5, steps 550 – 560) Hawkins does not disclose or suggest the set of entries for synchronization in the list looped varies based on the particular handheld computer being synchronized. The databases of the same list of conduit libraries are selected for synchronization any time the system of Hawkins is used to synchronize the handheld computer with the PC. Further, Hawkins does not teach or suggest the ability to intermix the information items (i.e. databases or files) for synchronization among different indexes, groups, or computers.

Based on the foregoing, Hawkins fails to disclose or suggest in any way claim 1, and therefore fails to anticipate or render obvious claim 1. Therefore, claim 1 is patentable. Reconsideration and allowance of claim 1 is respectfully requested.

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Claim 22

Claim 22, cites features not suggested much less disclosed by Hawkins. Among these features are:

Receiving identification from the first handheld computer, using the identification to store data on the second handheld computer that associates first information items with identification of either handheld computers or users, and using the identification and data to identify an information item to synchronize.

As explained earlier, databases of the same list of conduit libraries are selected for synchronization any time the system of Hawkins is used to synchronize the handheld computer with a PC. Hawkins does not suggest in any way that the selection of information items for synchronization can vary based on an identification of users or handheld computers. Therefore, Hawkins cannot in any way suggest using such an identification to identify information items to synchronize, as claimed.

Based on the foregoing, Hawkins fails to disclose or suggest in any way claim 22, and therefore fails to anticipate or render obvious claim 22. Therefore, claim 22 is patentable. Reconsideration and allowance of claim 22 is respectfully requested.

Claim 36

Claim 36, cites features not suggested much less disclosed by Hawkins. Among these features are:

A conduit that receives identification from the first handheld computer, and uses the identification and data that associates first information items with multiple identifications to identify a subset of information items to synchronize.

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For reasons similar to those discussed with respect to claims 1 and 22, Hawkins fails to disclose much less suggest a selection technique for selecting groups of information items to synchronize for which the compilation of information items depends on an identification, much less an identification received from another computer. Therefore, Hawkins fails to anticipate or render obvious claim 36, and claim 36 is patentable. Reconsideration and allowance of claim 36 is respectfully requested.

Dependant Claims

The pending claims not discussed so far are dependant claims that depend on an independent claim that is discussed above. Because each of the dependant claims include the limitations of claims upon which they depend, the dependant claims are patentable for at least those reasons the claims upon which the dependant claims depend are patentable. Removal of the rejections with respect to the dependant claims and allowance of the dependant claims is respectfully requested. In addition, the dependent claims introduce additional limitations that independently render them patentable. Due to the fundamental difference already identified, a separate discussion of those limitations is not included at this time.

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CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are patentable over the art of record. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is requested by Applicants. Applicants urge the Examiner to telephone Applicants' attorney at (408) 414-1206 if any issues remain that preclude allowance of the application. The Office is given permission to charge any unpaid fees to Applicants' deposit account (50-1302).

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the Patent and Trademark Office Fax No. (703) 872-9306

on June 11, 2004

by

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